

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 1-19 are now present in this application. Claims 1, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 are independent.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Drawing Objections

The drawings are objected to because they do not illustrate the light conductor element being within an interior space of one of a headlight and a taillight, as recited in claim 1.

In order to overcome the objection to the drawings, Applicants have submitted a proposed drawing correction in a separate Letter to the Official Draftsperson. Specifically, Applicants propose to illustrate the reflector 14 and headlight 15 in Figure 1, as these elements are discussed in the specification in paragraph [0025], on page 8. Accordingly, reconsideration of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Amendments to the Specification

Applicants have amended the specification by inserting reference numerals into the text of paragraph [0025] on page 8. The reference numerals bring the specification into conformance with the proposed drawing corrections to Figure 1.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner indicates that claims 13-19 are allowed. The Examiner indicates that claims 2, 3, 5-7 and 9-12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1, 4 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Glienicke. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Glienicke shows a "mushroom-shaped" light guide for illuminating a scale of a motor vehicle's instrument gauge, such as a tachometer or speedometer.

Applicants' independent claim 1 recites a combination of structural features wherein the light conductor element is in an interior space of one of a

headlight and a taillight. Glienicke fails to show or suggest such an arrangement.

The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art that the light conductor element of Glienicke "can be arranged at any desired place of a vehicle including headlight or taillight depending on necessity." Applicants disagree.

In MPEP 2143, it is stated "there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings."

Glienicke only suggests illuminating a scale of a motor vehicle's device, e.g. an instrument gauge, such as a tachometer or speedometer. Glienicke fails to suggest any other placement on the motor vehicle, and certainly fails to suggest placing his lighting device in a headlight or taillight.

The Examiner's asserted motivation to modify the Glienicke reference out of "necessity" is not understood. There appears to be no "necessity" to put Glienicke's instrument scale lighting device into a headlight or taillight of a vehicle. Indeed, so placing the device into a vehicle's headlight or taillight would be counterintuitive for the following reasons.

Glienicke shows a "mushroom" shaped light guide. The solid configuration of the center of the mushroom shape would block the light of the headlight or the taillight. The Glienicke device is designed to take light from a

centrally located light source, and send the light through the mushroom shape, so that it exits the edges of the head of the mushroom (see Figure 1). A prism redirects the light 90 degrees to illuminate a circular scale of an instrument.

If the device of Glienicke were placed into a headlight or taillight of a vehicle, the material forming the central area of the mushroom shape would block the light of the headlight or taillight's bulb. Glienicke's light guide does not have an open shape which would permit the light of a headlight or taillight's bulb to exit the headlight or taillight. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would not consider placing the instrument gauge lighting device of Glienicke into a headlight or taillight assembly.

In Glienicke, a separate part diverts the light from the edges of the disc to the front, namely the prism (illustrated in Figure 1 between reference numerals 2 and 3). The light guide element 1, which occupies the central region of the device appears dark from the front. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have found it obvious to use such a device inside of a headlight or a taillight of a vehicle. Also, the device of Glienicke includes extended elements, such as the conical section 5, which cause the device to be deep in size, and complicates removal of the device from a mold.

Moreover, independent claim 1 recites "two adjacent light out-coupling elements" and "at least two light diverting surfaces (6) ... each being respectively associated with one of the light out-coupling elements (2)." For purposes of illustration, not limitation, reference can be made to Applicants'

Figure 6 which illustrates three light out-coupling elements (1) and three light diverting surfaces (6).

Glienicke fails to show or suggest the claimed invention. In Glienicke, there is one light out-coupling element, namely the flat upper portion of the mushroom shape in Figure 1. Glienicke's single light out-coupling element would be disc shaped. Further, Glienicke's device includes only one light diverting surface. Glienicke's light diverting surface would be a conically shaped continuous surface, which diverts light 90 degrees away from the central axis of the mushroom shape in 360 degrees of direction. Glienicke's arrangement is very different from the combination of elements recited in Applicants' independent claim 1 which requires two adjacent light out-coupling elements and at least two light diverting surfaces.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

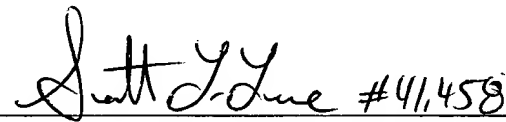
It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Mr. Scott L. Lowe (Reg. No. 41,458) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and further replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASH & BIRCH, LLP

By  #41,458
James T. Eller, Jr., #39,538
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22032-0747
(703) 205-8000

JTE/SLL:mmi

Enclosures: Version with Markings to Show Changes Made
Letter to the Official Draftsperson

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification

Paragraph [0025] on page 8 has been revised as follows:

[0025] The lamp depicted in Fig. 1 serves as a position light and has a ring-shaped light conductor element. The lamp is intended for use with a headlight **14** **[that is not shown]**. The ring-shaped light conductor 1 encircles a lens of a light module in an interior space of the headlight **14**. The ring-shaped light conductor element 1 can also encircle a bowl-shaped reflector **15**. The light conductor element 1 has a single light in-coupling element 3 with a light source 4 associated therewith. A light diode serves as the light source 4. The light in-coupling element 3 and the light source 4 are arranged below the light module and a separate part of the light guide element 1. The light in-coupling element 3 is placed between two light out-coupling elements 2 that have a circular-shaped cross section; together they form an open ring and transition into one another because of the ring shaped structure.